

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

FEB. 21, 2006 . 4:41PM CCS LEGAL

NO. 262 P. 2

LUTHER et al.
10/675,352
Page 2

Amendments to the claims:

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS IN THE APPLICATION

1. (Currently amended) A fiber optic connector comprising:

a multifiber ferrule having an end face and an opposed rear face, the end face defining a plurality of optical fiber bores opening therethrough for receiving respective optical fibers, the fiber optic connector defining a longitudinal axis that is generally parallel to the optical fiber bores and the end face defining at least one lateral axis generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis;

means for applying a biasing force to the ferrule in the direction of the longitudinal axis;
and

a spring seat having a forward portion that engages the rear face of the ferrule and a rearward portion opposite the forward portion; and

at least one pair of spaced apart force centering elements, the force centering elements engaging one of the ferrule and the biasing force means to balance the biasing force about the lateral axis defined by the end face of the ferrule;

wherein the force centering elements are medially disposed on the rearward portion of the spring seat and each force centering element comprises a protrusion that extends outwardly from the rearward portion.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled).

4. (Currently amended) A fiber optic connector according to ~~claim 3~~ ~~claim 1~~ wherein the protrusion engages the biasing force means that exerts the biasing force on the ferrule and wherein the forward portion of the spring seat engages the rear face of the ferrule to transfer the biasing force to the ferrule.

Claims 5-20 (Canceled).

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

FEB. 21, 2006 . 4:42PM

CCS LEGAL

NO. 262 P. 3

LUTHER et al.
10/675,352
Page 3

21. (Currently Amended) A fiber optic connector comprising:

a multifiber ferrule having an end face and an opposed rear face, the ferrule having a plurality of optical fiber bores extending therethrough for receiving the end portions of respective optical fibers adjacent the end face, the ferrule further having at least one guide pin hole for receiving a guide pin to align the multifiber ferrule with a mating multifiber ferrule, the guide pin hole defining an axis that is parallel to the optical fiber bores, the fiber optic connector defining a longitudinal axis that is generally parallel to the axis defined by the guide pin hole and at least one lateral axis generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis;

means for applying a biasing force to the ferrule in the direction of the longitudinal axis; and

a spring seat having a forward portion that engages the rear face of the ferrule and a rearward portion opposite the forward portion; and

at least a pair of spaced apart force centering elements disposed symmetrically about the lateral axis to apply a resultant biasing force to the ferrule in the direction of the longitudinal axis such that the ferrule is not subjected to a moment about the lateral axis;

wherein the force centering elements are medially disposed on the rearward portion of the spring seat and each force centering element comprises a protrusion that extends outwardly from the rearward portion.

22. (Currently amended) A fiber optic connector comprising:

a multifiber ferrule movably disposed within the fiber optic connector and having an end face, an opposed rear face and a plurality of optical fiber bores extending between the end face and the rear face, the optical fiber bores opening through the end face and the end face defining a plane that is generally perpendicular to the optical fiber bores and a longitudinal axis generally parallel to the optical fiber bores;

means for applying a biasing force to the ferrule; and

a spring seat having a forward portion that engages the rear face of the ferrule and a rearward portion opposite the forward portion; and

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

FEB. 21, 2006 . 4:42PM

CCS LEGAL

NO. 262 P. 4

LUTHER et al.
10/675,352
Page 4

at least a pair of spaced apart force centering means disposed symmetrically about the longitudinal axis for balancing the biasing force applied to the ferrule such that the ferrule moves only in a direction that is parallel to the optical fiber bores and does not produce a moment about a lateral axis in the plane defined by the end face;

wherein the force centering elements are medially disposed on the rearward portion of the spring seat and each force centering element comprises a protrusion that extends outwardly from the rearward portion.

Claims 23-35 (Canceled).